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Illinois Department of Commerce
and Community Affairs

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DCCA's Competitive Communities Initiative

Why has CCI been developed?

Research and experience show that there is a direct link between the economic well-being of a state and the ability of its communities to compete with similar communities. DCCA believes that the most important step a community can take is to perform a rigorous self-assessment that identifies the community's leadership, strengths, needs, and resources needed to attract and retain the investment necessary to support a high quality of life. The assessment is then developed into a written action/implementation plan that serves as a blueprint for the future. Through extensive research, DCCA identified six basic "Foundations for Growth" that, when addressed by communities, will ensure a comprehensive self-assessment. These foundations are:

- **A Skilled and Adaptive Workforce**
- **Access to Technology & Business Modernization Resources**
- **Access to Capital for Business Growth and Expansion**
- **Basic & Advanced Infrastructure**
- **Pro-Competitive Business Policies**
- **Social Infrastructure**

Is your Community ready for the 21st Century?

Today's fast paced society requires communities to be ready to respond to a multitude of problems and opportunities in a prompt and meaningful fashion. Competitive communities take a leadership role in determining their own futures; they know where they want to go, and have developed a community consensus.

Communities don't have to compete with one another, but they do need to be competitive.

The Competitive Communities Initiative (CCI) can help your community become competitive. CCI is a dynamic, hands-on project. It can help your community to prosper in the 21st Century.

The success of a community's CCI project will depend entirely on the efforts that the community is willing to make.

Questions and Answers

Question: *What is the Competitive Communities Initiative (CCI)?*

Answer: The Competitive Communities Initiative is a program administered by the Illinois Department of Commerce and Community Affairs designed to assist local communities in their business and community development efforts. This is done through state assistance in helping communities conduct a rigorous local self-assessment, linked to a written action plan that identifies the communities goals, priorities and the actions needed to attain these goals.

Question: *Who's in charge of local CCI efforts?*

Answer: The local community.

Question: *How does it work?*

Answer: The Department of Commerce and Community Affairs assigns a CCI specialist to work with the local community in the CCI process. This includes assistance in developing a local leadership structure, conducting a self-assessment and preparing a written

action plan. In addition, CCI specialist serve as a link to the community in identifying private and government agencies that can provide technical assistance and resources.

Question: *How much does it cost?*

Answer: CCI guidance is provided free to participating communities. Incidental expenses that arise are paid for by the local sponsors. The most significant cost is time committed by local leaders.

Question: *What's the finished product?*

Answer: A locally developed community plan that outlines the steps needed to strengthen the community's foundations for growth.

Question: *How do we participate?*

Answer: Communities are selected on a competitive basis. Applications are available through the Department of Commerce and Community Affairs.

DCCA provides:

- A CCI staff person who will serve as a community's guide and resource person.
- Criteria to help locally directed community groups conduct a community-wide self-assessment.
- Assistance with drafting a memorandum of agreement between the community, DCCA and any third parties.
- A resource catalog for community/economic development.
- Long-term follow-up service to participating communities.
- Linkage to technical resources, funding sources, and private or governmental agencies.

Please complete request form and return to:

Illinois Department of
Commerce and Community Affairs
Office of Local Initiatives
620 East Adams Street, S-3
Springfield, Illinois 62701

Or call 217/524-8015; TDD 800/785-6055.

Yes I am interested. Please:

_____ Send me an application form

_____ Put me on the CCI News mailing list

Community

Contact Person

Organization

Address

Phone Number (_____) _____

*Communities will be selected on a competitive basis. Need,
location and other external factors may be considered.*

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